



*Office of the United States Attorney*  
*District of Arizona*  
**José de Jesus Rivera**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 25, 1999**

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### **TUNNEL FOUND IN NACO, ARIZONA LEADS TO INDICTMENT OF 13 INDIVIDUALS ON DRUG CHARGES**

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA** -- Thirteen people have been indicted, and 9 arrested, on drug smuggling charges connected to the discovery of a tunnel that provides an underground link between Mexico and the United States. Federal agents, in cooperation with local law enforcement and law enforcement officials in Mexico, have conducted an intensive and lengthy investigation into the organizations that use the tunnel to move large quantities of drugs "under" and thereby, "across" the border. As a result of the investigation, federal agents seized \$1.5 million dollars in cash and 2,668 pounds of cocaine.

Special Agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Customs, and the Arizona Department of Public Safety, have worked together to investigate the key players who are involved in the tunnel activity. It has been discovered that the tunnel was created to provide access for a multitude of organizations to move drugs from Mexico to the United States. The defendants are charged with facilitating that transportation and receiving a fee for their services.

A federal grand jury handed down a pair of indictments on May 19, 1999, that were unsealed today, upon the arrest of the defendants. U.S. Attorney José de Jesus Rivera, Thomas Raffanello, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, Guadalupe Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Awilda Villafane, Special Agent in Charge, US Customs, and Joe Albo, Director,

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Arizona Department of Public Safety, outlined the details of the investigation at a news conference in Sierra Vista this afternoon.

*“This investigation is another great example of how much can be accomplished when federal, state, and local law enforcement work together to achieve a common goal,” U.S. Attorney Rivera said.*

The federal indictment charges the defendants with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Cocaine, which has a maximum penalty of 10 years to life imprisonment, a \$4 million dollar fine, or both; Possession with Intent to Distribute Cocaine which carries a maximum penalty of 10 years to life imprisonment, a \$4 million dollar fine, or both.

Mr. Rivera stressed that an indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and an individual’s guilt is only established upon conviction.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Customs Service, U.S. Border Patrol, the Arizona Department of Public Safety, the Border Alliance Group, Pima County Sheriff’s Office, Bisbee Police Department, and the Cochise County Sheriff’s Department. We would also like to thank federal law enforcement officials in Mexico for their assistance.

The following defendants are charged with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Cocaine; Possession with Intent to Distribute Cocaine; and Aid and Abet:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>RESIDENCE</u>	<u>DOB</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
<b>William B. Dillon</b>	<b>Naco, Sonora, Mexico</b>	<b>7/9/63</b>	
<b>Brian Aegerter</b>	<b>Tucson, AZ</b>	<b>12/12/72</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Jesus David Alvarez</b>	<b>Bisbee, AZ</b>	<b>2/29/67</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Kenneth Bishoff</b>	<b>Sierra Vista, AZ</b>	<b>12/12/63</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Jordan Trey Bull</b>	<b>Glendale, AZ</b>	<b>8/2/78</b>	
<b>Kenneth Friedman</b>	<b>Bisbee, AZ</b>	<b>10/16/44</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Mark Edward Griffiths</b>	<b>Tucson, AZ</b>	<b>8/29/58</b>	
<b>Steve Knipp</b>	<b>Sierra Vista, AZ</b>	<b>11/7/50</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Javier Dillon Villa</b>	<b>Tucson, AZ</b>	<b>3/2/78</b>	

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The following defendants are charged with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Cocaine:

<b>Jose E. Loya</b>	<b>Tucson, AZ</b>	<b>9/21/66</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Ira Friedman</b>	<b>Tucson, AZ</b>	<b>7/16/29</b>	<b>Custody</b>
<b>Nieves Montenegro-Nunez</b>	<b>Fresno, CA</b>	<b>8/5/57</b>	
<b>Francisco Valle-Hurtado</b>	<b>Naco, Sonora, Mexico</b>	<b>6/30/68</b>	<b>Custody (Mexico)</b>

CASE NUMBER: CR-99-759-TUC-FRZ & CR - 99-760-TUC-JMR  
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